



Tennessee Regulatory Authority

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Northeast Tennessee Counties to Receive 2-1-1 Dialing Code

Community news and referral information will soon be just three, short telephone digits away for residents of the northeast Tennessee Tri-Cities area.

The Tennessee Regulatory Authority (TRA) today approved the request of "Contact-Concern" of Northeast Tennessee to provide an abbreviated dialing code of "2-1-1" as an alternative means of accessing the area's community news and referral line.

The TRA recently permitted "Contact Ministries" to provide 2-1-1 dialing to the Tennessee counties of Carter, Green, Unicoi and Washington. The approval of both organizations for 2-1-1 dialing ensures that the seven county Tri-Cities area has access to the prescribed dialing code.

Both non-profit organizations, Contact-Concern and Contact Ministries, offer telephone help lines that provide assistance and referral information to persons in need. The two also work with support organizations such as the United Way, Safe House and Alcohol Anonymous, and provide reassurance calls and intervene in crisis situations.

Contact-Concern and Contact Ministries are staffed by trained volunteers. Contact-Concern's telephone lines are open 15 hours per day, seven days per week (calls received between the hours of 11 p.m. and 8 a.m. are received by answering machine) while Contact Ministries telephone lines are open 24 hours a day. All calls to both services are free of charge.

Today's action by the TRA reflects a Federal Communications Commission (FCC) mandate that restricts the use of the 2-1-1 code to communities providing "community information and referral services" (CC Docket No. 92-105 ¶21).

For more information about Contact-Concern, contact (423)-246-2273; for Contact Ministries, contact 423-926-0144 for Johnson City and 423-783-0090 for Greeneville, Tennessee.

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